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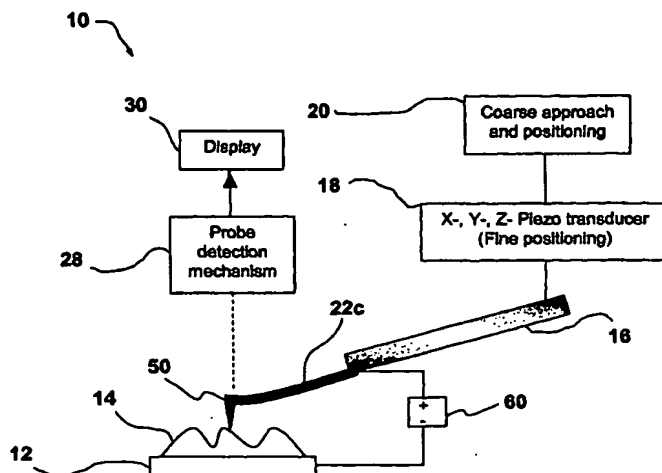
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(54) Title: PROBE FOR AN ATOMIC FORCE MICROSCOPE



(57) Abstract: A probe (22) for an atomic force microscope is adapted such that, as a sample (14) is scanned, it experiences a biasing force F_{direct} urging the probe towards the sample. This improves probe tracking of the sample surface and faster scans are possible. This is achieved by either including a biasing element (24, 50), which is responsive to an externally applied force, on the probe (22) and / or reducing the quality factor of a supporting beam. The biasing element may, for example, be a magnet (24) or an electrically-conducting element (50). The quality factor may be reduced by coating the beam with a mechanical-energy dissipating material.

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